



ANUSHKA MAHAL  
AND ROHIT BHALLA  
MAY 24, '13  
DANA POINT, CALIFORNIA

> **FEATURE WEDDING:** “We dated for two years without telling our parents, because we wanted to make sure it was real”

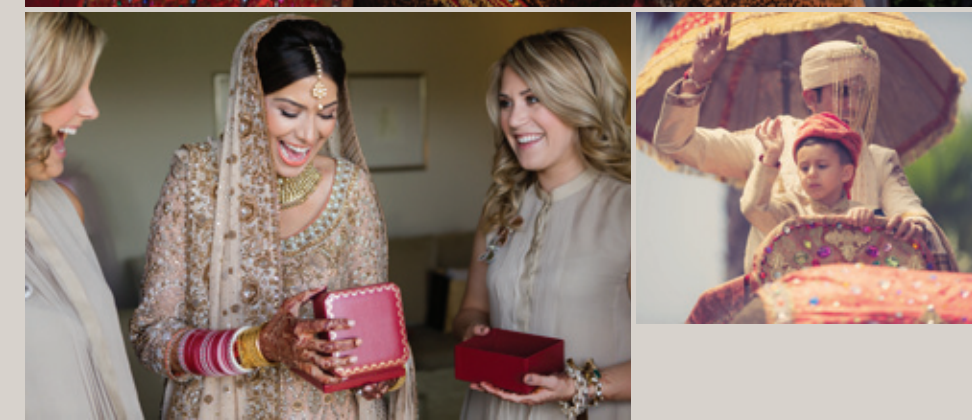
When sending her off to college in Los Angeles, Anushka Mahal's parents appreciated that the Bhalla family—whom they had done business with and lived in LA—were there for her. They invited the pre-med student to family dinners where she and the Bhallas' son, Rohit, became good friends over long talks and Lakers games.

Although it happened gradually, the two realized that their friendship had turned into romance. “We dated for two years without telling our parents, because we wanted to make sure it was real,” says Anushka.

She knew her heart well and often hinted at getting engaged, buying her groom-to-be a piggy bank pointedly engraved with the word, “Cartier,” and suggesting Paris as the perfect place to pop the question. However, Rohit wanted to be established in business before making his next move.

Upon passing her medical board exams, the couple traveled to Las Vegas to celebrate. Rohit took her to the Paris Hotel's Eiffel Tower Restaurant where, “the view with all the lights was incredible,” says Anushka. At dinner, Rohit rambled for 20 minutes about how proud he was of her. Then, as an uncharacteristic nervousness entered his voice, he removed a ring from his pocket, took Anushka's hand in his and put it on her finger.

A traditional Hindu weeklong wedding was planned, capped off by a ceremony overlooking the water at The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel and a reception for 500





some of our favorite things, like the jazz band and catering by Sushi Roku for the cocktail hour,” says Anushka.

The couple’s first dance was a fox-trot choreographed to Indian music. “In our minds we were Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers,” says Rohit. “I think we killed it.”

After the reception, the newlyweds jetted to Bora Bora and slept 13 hours after arriving, followed by 10 days of relaxation. “We laid on the beach, soaked in the sun and didn’t feel the least bit guilty,” says Anushka. Returning to Los Angeles, they settled into their new home as she started her new residency. “It’s been crazy,” says Anushka, “crazy and wonderful.”

> **Written by Francine Kaplan**  
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people at the Four Seasons Westlake Village.

On Tuesday of the wedding week, singers from Pakistan were flown in to entertain at the Beverly Wilshire, Beverly Hills (A Four Seasons Hotel) for the Sangeet, where customarily the families would first meet. Wednesday was the Mehndi, or henna ceremony, where Anushka’s hands were intricately painted with patterns said to ward off evil and promote fertility. Thursday the bride- and groom-to-be were separated for individual rituals.

Rohit entered Friday’s wedding ceremony riding on an elephant during the lively baraat or processional. “I’m kind of shy,” says Rohit, “but I let go and it was a blast!” The relatively short, 40-minute-long rites, performed in English, were old school mixed with modern twists. “Where it said, ‘I will include you in all financial matters,’” says Anushka, “I added, ‘except when they involve Rodeo Drive.’”

A post-ceremony lunch reception was followed by the emotional doli, where the bride officially leaves her family. “I’m an only child,” says Anushka, “so everyone was crying.”

According to the bride, there was “nothing traditional” about the huge reception on Saturday. “It was a big party incorporating



Location and Cake: **The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel** Dana Point, CA; Caterer: **Manohar’s Delhi Palace** La Puente, CA; Cake: **Superfine Bakery** Los Angeles, CA; Event Design and Planner: **Sonia Sharma Events & Design** Los Angeles, CA; Floral Design: **tic-tock Couture Florals** Los Angeles, CA; Linen and Rentals: **Revelry Event Designers** Los Angeles, CA; Lighting: **Ambiance AV** Santa Monica, CA; Wedding Dress, Veil and Groom’s Tuxedo: **Bunto Kazmi**; Bride’s Shoes: **Chanel** and **Jimmy Choo**; Wedding Bands: **Harry Winston** and **Cartier**; Photography: **Lin & Jirsa Photography** Santa Ana, CA